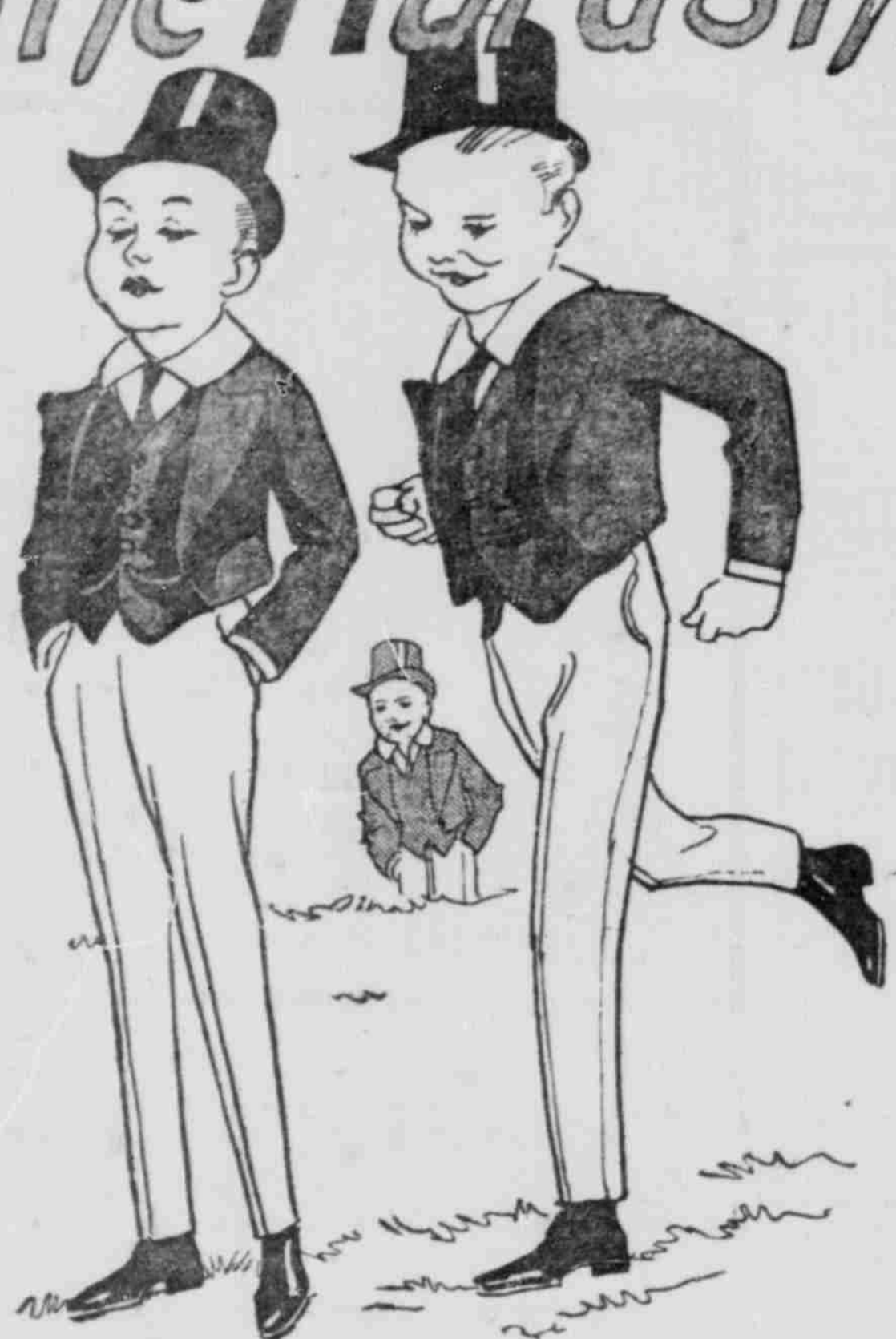


The Hardship of Being a Duke



"Hello, new fellow, what's your name?"
The poor shivering new fellow said:
"The Duke of —"
"Ah," said one of the questioners, "I've never kicked a Duke; here's my chance!" and he took it.

By His Grace the Duke of Manchester
Written Especially for this Page

THE hardships attached to being a Duke last from the cradle to the grave, although in the cradle they are not always appreciated, and once comfortably in the grave, I am told, they are more or less softened.

Of course, I don't wish to exaggerate, so I will at once admit that for the most part Dukes are not born Dukes and it is usually not until they are full grown and better able to bear the hardships that the Dukedom is loaded on them. But think of the long and weary training that leads up to it.

There are two stages in the life of a Duke, first he's an eldest son (which is a kind of purgatory) and then he's a Duke (that's—well let's get on!). I only wish I had the faculty to classify the hardships of Dukes scientifically; but, I haven't, so I must go at it haphazard.

My earliest recollections are of a long string of things I must not do because I must bear in mind that I would be a Duke some day. In those days, such is the innocence of youth, I believed this was a promise; I know now it was a veiled threat. In addition to the list, far too long to be started on here, of things one mightn't do, there was a still more formidable, but not so lengthy, list of things one must.

For instance, "get to know the tenants"; this consisted in being trotted out, washed and brushed to see "Mr. Peppercorn, my Lord," or "Mr. Hudson, one of the oldest tenants on the estate," all estimable gentlemen whom it would be a great treat to know now, but at that age meant a dismal hour taken from a short playtime, to be spent in the two equally distasteful tasks of "tidying up" and remembering with all your might what he told you about his children and his wife's ailments and his late father who "remembered your great-great-grandfather well."

Dukes Expected to Pay Double for Everything

"A fine gentleman he were, God bless him." The inference, luckily, struck one many years after.

Then during school years—there is a tradition in England that no one at a public school was a snob, but this is often carried to the length of being afraid of speaking to or encouraging anyone who has the misfortune to be a Duke, let alone giving them colors, or—as you Americans say—letting them make a team or a boat, for fear of the suspicion of favoritism.

Also I have heard of a certain Duke going to Eton who was asked, as all new boys are by some other boys:

"Hello, new fellow, what's your name?"; the poor shivering new fellow said:

"The Duke of —"
"Ah," said one of the questioners, "I've never kicked a Duke; here's my chance!" and he took it.

At the Varsity the principal hardships consist in having to pay double for anything, except college fees, on about half the allowance one is supposed to have, and this hardship now stays with the budding Duke through life with varying degrees of severity.

This especially applies to tips, although I never have been audibly snubbed for under-tipping but once; then it was the young of the genus Ethiop, sub-genus bellhop, in a Fifth avenue hotel, in New York. He smiled so, I gave

His Grace the Duke of Manchester Writes of the Embarrassments and Misfortunes Which the Petted Members of the British Peerage Cannot Escape

him 50 cents, ordinary tip a quarter, New England States, a dime.

His face fell and still holding it out he said:

"Here, Boss, what's this?"

I am still puzzled to know what he expected, but in the heat of the moment I took back the fifty cents, apologized humbly, and gave him a quarter.

One of the greatest hardships, to my mind, is that it debar you from having a business education. You may learn to kill people in the army or navy, and very useful it is in these days, or how to talk them to death in politics, you may even conceivably learn what is euphoniously called "how to manage your own estate," which means as much as an estate agent (overseer) thinks it good for you to know, say how to distinguish turnips from lucerne and similar facts in natural history.

Also that it is an inevitable law of nature that when farmers have a bad year rents must be reduced, but that when the year is good, rents stay down; but no knowledge of how to get out and earn something, that is apparently fatal, and, while it is not, I believe, in the Criminal Code punishable by beheading on Tower Hill, is looked upon in the same light as Hoseason.

You don't know what Hoseason is, neither do I, neither do any of the distinguished lawyers I have consulted, with a view to finding out how to commit it. But a penalty is provided for it in the English law, so it must exist.

It is true there are Dukes so rich that they can afford to have people to look after their estates for them and still have something over for themselves, so perhaps I ought not to cite lack of business education as a universal Ducal hardship; however, let it go.

Many hardships are so obvious that they scarcely need mentioning, lack of privacy, the careful searching and exaggeration of any mistakes and careful concealment or minimizing of any success, social functions, snobs, and bores, but these—like death and taxes—are common to many besides Dukes.

When Ducal Robes and Coronets May Be Left Off

On the other hand many supposed Ducal hardships are much exaggerated, for instance, the coronet is no longer worn before breakfast and scarlet robes may be left off for golf, and in fact for many games.

Also being born with a silver spoon in one's mouth is no longer de rigueur as mid-Victorian novelists tell one was, invariably, the case in their day. This may possibly

account for the slow rate of increase in the Duke species in England up to the present, for the silver spoon habit must have added enormously to the infant mortality and the trials of motherhood in the afflicted classes.

But there is one hardship of which I must complain vigorously, and that is the political use of the word "bloated" in reference to Dukes. Having seen a great many Dukes in my time I can assure you I never saw one who was really bloated, that is noticeably, bloated.

And, if you have read as far as this, you will see that this must be so of necessity, hardship is the deadly enemy of bloat.

Next Sunday the Duke of Manchester will write an entertaining article on "Do Actresses Make Suitable Wives for Noblemen?"

His Grace the Duke of Manchester, in His Official Robes of State

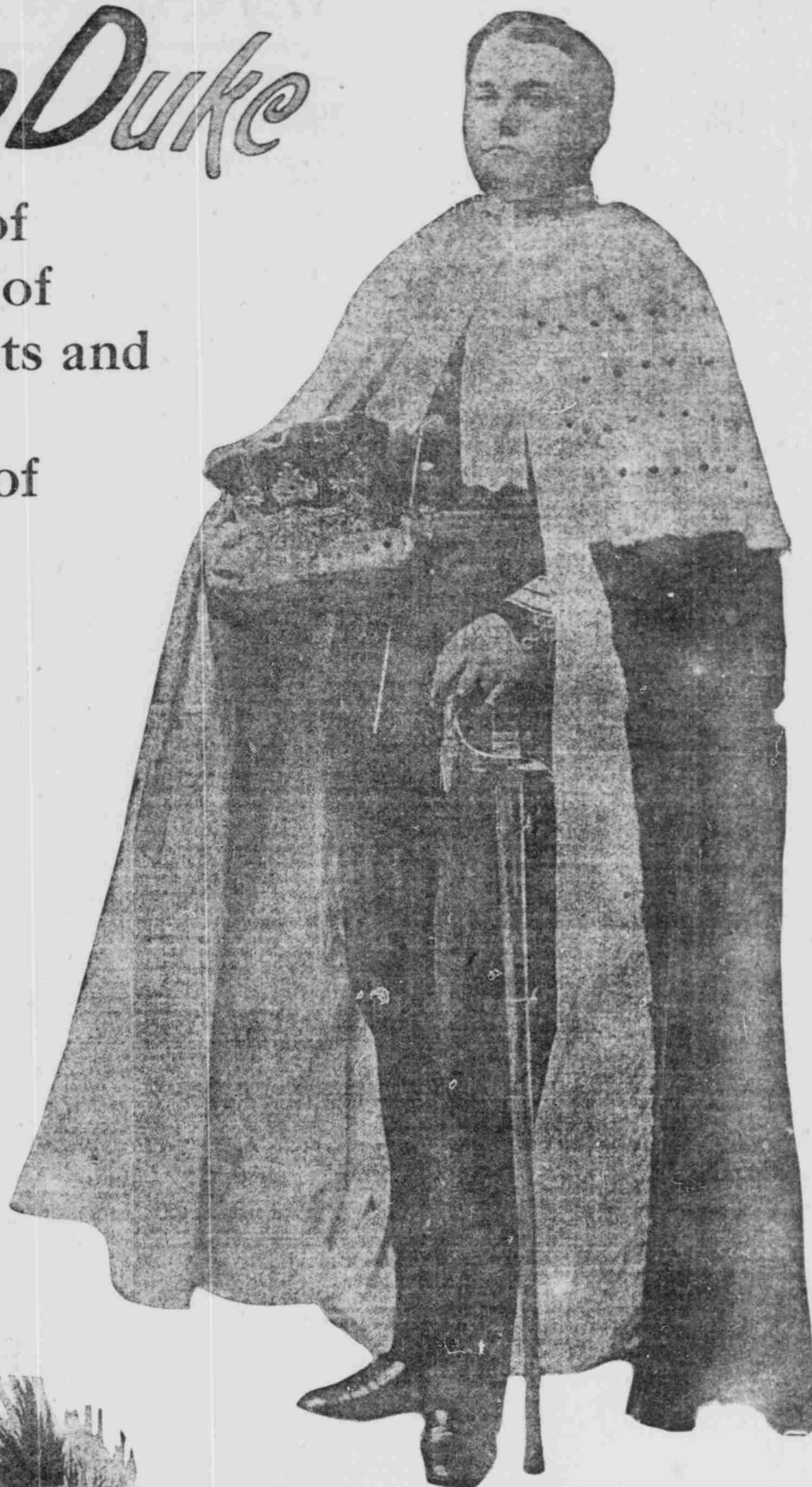


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The Duke and His Wife on Public Exhibition Looking Bored to Death

Why Old Bachelors Seldom Marry Old Maids

NO matter how old a bachelor is when he marries he very seldom selects an old maid for his wife. If he does not lead a young girl to the altar he will choose a widow either natural or grass, in preference to the old maid. Many matchmakers have planned to marry some old maid aunt or sister off to a wealthy old bachelor but seldom are their plans successful.

Whenever an old maid and old bachelor meet there is a clash and a very noticeable one, too. They seem to despise each other as the cat and dog, and one can almost hear them mutter to each other: "You old maid!" and "You old bachelor, why haven't you taken a wife and supported her as other men? I know men of your type! I would rather talk to a married man any day."

The married woman always puts herself out to be nice to the bachelor, she treats him just as a married man. She does not regard him as a new specimen and one to "handle with care." No matter how timid or non-talkative the bachelor he always finds himself at home and comfortably at ease with the matron. There is something soothing about her to him, something which takes him back to the good times he used to have with his mother and sisters.

But the moment he comes in contact with a real old maid he feels like a schoolboy caught in some mischief by his teacher. He feels as if instead of playing "hooky" from school he had been playing "hooky" from matrimony, and leaving undone many things which he ought to have done. He has no excuse to offer for remaining a bachelor and shirking matrimony all these years, and even if he had one he doesn't feel like telling her. Instead he feels a strong inclination to run away and he usually does!

The bachelor feels thoroughly at home and ready to talk and laugh with the matron, but he feels even giddy with the young girl. She never turns the eye of wonder or reproach upon him, neither does she condemn his character or feel the least bit annoyed at him for never having married. She blushing looks upon him as a hero, or at least fancies that she does. Never for one moment does he feel like telling her why he never married, nor does he feel the slightest bit like running away from her.

The old maid usually says or does something which makes him retire into his shell, but the matron and young girl are so frank and free and full of life that the bachelor comes forth and acts like himself. If any one can coax him to the altar it is usually this jolly matron or innocent fun-loving girl.